REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the thorough examination of the present application. In view of the arguments presented in detail below, it is submitted that all of the claims are patentable.

I. The Claimed Invention

The present invention is directed to a mobile wireless cellular communications device. As recited in Claim 1, for example, the device includes a wireless cellular transceiver and a controller for cooperating therewith for receiving text messages from a wireless communications network. The device further includes a headset output connected to the controller. The controller is for switching between a normal message mode and a hands-free audio message mode based upon a connection between the headset output and a headset. Moreover, when in the audio message mode, the controller outputs at least one audio message comprising speech generated from at least one of the received text messages via the headset output.

Independent Claim 9 is directed to a related cellular communication system. Moreover, independent Claim 16 is directed to a related method, and independent Claim 20 is directed to a related computer-readable medium.

II. The Claims Are Patentable

The Examiner rejected independent Claims 1, 9, 16, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based upon U.S. Patent No. 6,181,956 to Koshan. This patent is directed to a portable communication system including a base device **120** (e.g., a mobile telephone or paging device) and an earpiece **125**, which are spatially separated but coupled by a communication link, such as a wireless communication link. The base device **120** is operable in first and second operating modes **410**. When in the first operating mode, the base device **120** receives and presents text-based messages in human readable form to the user via a user interface associated with the base device. When in the second operating mode, the received message is converted to audible form using a text-to-speech synthesizer and presented to the user via the earpiece. See, e.g., abstract and FIG. 1 of Koshan.

The Examiner contends that Koshan teaches all of the recitations of the above-noted independent claims, including that the controller is for switching between a normal message mode and a hands-free audio message mode based upon a connection between the headset output and a headset. As support, the Examiner points to col. 2, line 39 through col. 3, line 38 of Koshan. Yet, this passage makes clear that the Koshan base device DOES NOT switch between different modes based upon a connection between a headset output and a headset. Rather, the base device **120** includes a

selectable mode switch **255** that is operable by a user to select the operating mode of the base device. The selected operating mode is stored in a location **285** in a memory **280** and specifies either a first mode in which messages received are presented at the base device, or a second mode in which messages received are converted to audible form and presented at the earpiece. See col. 2, lines 39-47 of Koshan.

In other words, the user has to "manually" enable the second mode of operation in which messages are converted to audible form and presented at the earpiece. Accordingly, with the Koshan system it would possible for a user to forget to enable the second mode of operation despite connecting the earpiece to the base device. As such, the user could still miss important messages in situations when viewing of the base device is not possible. Moreover, Koshan also teaches that when the base device is in the second mode, it is preferable that "presentation of the message at the base device, as well as audible alerts at the base device, are suppressed." Col. 3, lines 39-41. Thus, if a user were to forget to switch the base device back to the first mode when finished with the earpiece, the base device would not notify the user when important new messages have arrived, but would instead convert such messages to speech and attempt to send them to the earpiece.

In stark contrast, the above-noted independent claims

recite switching between a normal message mode and a hands-free audio message mode based upon a connection between the headset output and a headset. Accordingly, when the user connects the headset to the mobile wireless cellular communications device, the hands-free audio message mode is enabled and the user need not worry about missing important messages from forgetting to use a separate mode switch - this is already taken care of for the user. Moreover, upon disconnecting the headset from the device, the user also need not worry about the device failing to provide normal message notifications and message viewing, for example, because the switch from the hands-free audio message mode to the normal message mode is performed based merely upon the disconnection.

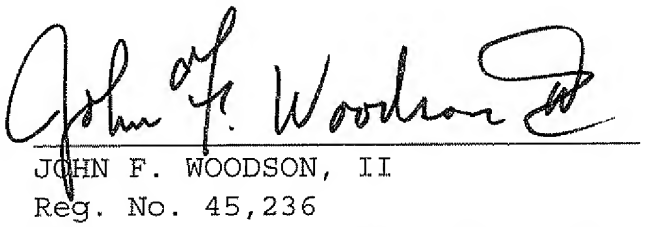
Accordingly, Koshan fails to teach (or fairly suggest) all of the recitations of the above-noted independent claims. Since the remaining prior art of record fails to provide the noted deficiencies, independent Claims 1, 9, 16, and 20 are patentable. Their respective dependent claims, which recite yet further distinguishing features, are also patentable over the prior art and require no further discussion herein.

CONCLUSIONS

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that all of the claims are patentable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested in due course. Should any minor

informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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